stones were planted inside the registered holdings so as to prevent obstruction to traffic. But, subsequently, the intervening space between the demarcation stones and the actual boundaries of the *porambokes* was also treated as *poramboke* and cases were taken against the occupants under the Land Conservancy Regulation and they were fined and asked to pay prohibitory assessment. This was hard. In some such cases, the people have obtained redress through civil courts which declared that the so called *porambokes* were no real *porambokes* at all. But it was not possible for every person to seek remedy in the civil courts as such a course was costly. The member therefore prayed that the strips of land lying between registered lands and the adjoining *prambokes* should be assigned to the registry holders.

He next said that in 22 of the 31 *pakuthies* of the Chirayinkil taluk, the commutation rate for tax on *pandaravaka* lands was 11 chs. per *para* of paddy while in the other 9 *pakuthies* the tax was recovered in kind. From 1102, however, the tax on seven of the nine *pakuthies* which belong to the *Sripadam* was commuted into money. But the rate was not fixed. While the rate was 6 *fanams* per *para* of paddy till 1105, it was 5 *fanams* in 1106 and 4½ *fanams* in 1107. It was not proper that different rates were applied to the same class of lands in a taluk. The member therefore requested that the commutation rate should be made uniform and fixed at 11 chs. a *para* of paddy.

DEWAN'S REPLY : Mr. Kali Pillai, you complained about the difficulties in regard to *porambokes*. If any specific cases of hardship are brought to notice, they will be investigated. But it is now a settled fact that *porambokes* are reserved for public or communal purposes and that they should not be encroached upon.

The *Sripadam* lands are freehold lands and the Government cannot interfere with them. If you have anything to urge about them, you have to approach the *Sripadam* authorities.

4. Grievances of the tenants under the Edapalli Chief.

MR. C. G. VARGHESE (*Tiruvalla taluk, Group I*) said that he was voicing forth the grievances of the tenants of the Edapalli Chief with special reference to the tenants of the Kalluppara pakuthi in the Tiruvalla taluk who formed a majority of them. One of the outstanding grievances was the recovery of tax in kind. While the system of taxation in kind in respect of Government lands was abolished so long ago as 1081, it was still upheld by the Chief. The system was subject to several drawbacks. The tax-payer had to take the paddy to the Provertikar, wait for his convenience and measure out the paddy to the satisfaction of the latter. In practice, the tax was paid only in money at such rates as were fixed by the Provertikar although the receipts were given for the paddy tax. The system while it did not benefit the Chief was a source of hardship, annoyance and humiliation to the tenants. The tax should therefore be commuted into money and in fixing the commutation rate the principle laid down in the Royal Proclamation dated the 24th February 1886 should be followed. The fact that, unlike the Sirkar, the Chief does not spend any

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portion of the tax collected for the benefit of the tax-payer and the terrible fall in prices of agricultural products should also be taken into consideration in fixing the rate. The member's view was that 11 chs. a *para* of paddy would be fair, although the average rate for Government lands was only 7¼ chs. per *para* of paddy.

Another source of grievance was the non-disposal of *pokkuvaravu* cases. In the Kalluppara pakuthi alone 2,000 cases were pending, besides several cases which had not come to the notice of the Chief's agent. The result was that the records did not show who the owner of a particular land was and what was the amount of tax he had to pay. It was not uncommon that the man who parted with his land was called upon to pay the tax thereon. Sometimes the tax was recovered from the transferor and the transferee. Properties of one man were sold for arrears which another had to pay. Some time limit should be prescribed and pressure brought to bear on the Provertikars in regard to the prompt disposal of *pokkuvaravu* cases. There was a manager whose duty it was to inspect the Pakuthi Offices and records. But his inspection was only superficial. Under the Rent Recovery Regulation the rent roll and the accounts should be kept in the same form as in respect of Government lands. But the system could not work well unless the Provertikars of the Edavaka were placed under the disciplinary control of the Tahsildars concerned.

Another complaint was that the welfare of the tenants was not attended to either by the Government or the Chief. The Chief was not spending any portion of the revenue collected or works of general usefulness. Roads and schools have been opened by the people. But tax was being recovered even on lands given up for roads. Irrigational facilities were a long-felt want and the need for a dispensary was keenly felt.

The Chief was establishing public markets and collecting fees This was a sovereign right vested in His Highness the Maha Raja alone.

In the matter of assignment of lands, the Chief was acting against the provisions of Regulation IV of 1068. The assignment was made without any regard for the area of the lands or the claims of the occupants. The applicability of the rules regarding the assignment of Government lands was the best way of safeguarding the interests of the people and preventing abuse.

Great difficulty was being experienced by the people in the matter of erecting places of worship. The tenants of Edapalli had to get permission both from the Government and the Edapalli Chief for erecting places of worship. The agents of the Chief insisted on money payments for the grant of permission. The member said that the Government alone had the right to grant this permission and that the Chief was not exercising that right till very recently.

Other grievances were about the enhancement of tax on Tiruvilam lands on alienation and the denial of the tenant's right to any portion of the value of royal trees. Although, under the Rent Recovery

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Regulation, a tenant of the Edapalli Chief had as much right as the holder of a Government land in regard to royal trees, the Chief was appropriating the tenant's share of the value also without any justification.

Past history of the Edavaka would reveal that it was mismanaged for a long time and that the Government had in 1056 assumed its management and after a stipulated period handed over the management back to the Chief. But it has since been mismanaged again. The people have been representing their grievances to the Government and the Chief through memorials and deputations and representations in the Assembly and the Legislative Council. Unrest prevailed among the people; but they have faith in the Government and the Sovereign in setting matters right. The Government have the inherent right to interfere in the affairs of the Edavaka and the member therefore requested the Government to assume management of the Edavaka, the revenue administration of the several *pakuthies* being entrusted to the Tahsildars concerned and the Chief given an annual payment in lieu of the rent due. He concluded by saying that early action be taken in the matter.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Varghese, Government, I believe, are at present unable to order the conversion of the paddy tax into cash payment without the consent of the Edapalli Chief. The remedy will be for the Edavaka tenants to make a representation to the Chief.

As regards the other defects and grievances pointed out, the Land Revenue Commissioner has made certain proposals to remedy them and they are under consideration. Personally, I hope, I shall be able to tour in that neighbourhood shortly.

MEMBER: I would request that pressure be brought to bear on the Chief to accept the suggestions that I have made.

DEWAN: I shall also try to meet him, as soon as I can.

5. Remission of tax on rubber lands.

Mr. S. N. URE (*Mundakayam Planters' Association*) said that, on the 28th July 1931, the Government published an order R. Dis. No. 1039/31/Revenue, dated the 23rd July 1931, in which they sanctioned a reduction, until further orders, of the tax on rubber lands from Rs. 2 to Re. 1 per acre in all cases in which the tax was recovered at the former rate, and made this concession applicable to the tax due for 1106 also. But this order was interpreted differently by different Revenue officers. In view of the serious financial position of the rubber industry, and the need for careful budgeting for the next year, the member requested that the Government might give a ruling as regards the lands to which the order was applicable, so that the rubber companies might know how they stood in the matter of remission of taxes.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Ure, I am sure Government will be very pleased to give the ruling that you ask for if your Association will give definite ways in which that may be done.

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